

**REMARKS**

In the present Amendment, Claims 1 and 61 have been amended to recite that the operator handle has a thumbscrew. Section 112 support for this amendment is found, for example, in Figs 4, 7-10, 14-15, 18-19. Claim 51 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claim 60 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of Claim 62. Claim 62 has been cancelled. Claim 63 has been amended to depend from Claim 60. In addition, the claims have been amended for clarification. No new matter has been added, and entry of the Amendment is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the Amendment, Claims 1-50, 52-61 and 63-88 will be pending, of which Claims 69-88 are withdrawn from consideration.

In paragraph No. 3 of the Action, Claims 14, 21-25, 50 and 61 have been objected to because of insufficient antecedent basis for the limitations in the claims.

As noted, Claims 14, 21-25, 50 and 61 have been amended to address the Examiner's concern. Withdrawal of the objection to Claims 14, 21-25, 50 and 61 is respectfully requested.

In paragraph No. 5 of the Action, Claim 5 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite. The Examiner contends that it is unclear whether the recitation "high compressive stiffness" is a compression feature or a bendability feature.

Applicants disclose at page 3, lines 21-26 of the specification the member as being stiff and incompressible. Accordingly, withdrawal of the § 112 rejection of Claim 5 is respectfully requested.

In paragraph No. 7 of the Action, Claims 1-4, 6-8, 23-28, 30, 32, 39, 41, 43-47, 50-53 and 57-68 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Lenker et al (US 6,126,685).

Applicants submit that this rejection should be withdrawn because Lenker et al does not disclose or render obvious the presently claimed delivery system.

Independent Claim 1 as amended recites that “an operator handle, having a thumbscrew for movement of the catheter shaft relative to the inner core to deploy the self expanding stent.”

In contrast, Lenker et al only discloses that shaft 34 has a proximal handle 44 and sheath 32 has a proximal handle 40 (Figs. 2 and 6). Lenker et al does not teach or suggest an operator handle having a thumbscrew for movement of the catheter shaft.

Independent Claim 60 as amended recites that the catheter shaft and the operating handle are interconnected by a connector.

In contrast, the handle and the shaft in Lenker et al are integrated. Lenker et al does not teach or suggest that the catheter shaft and the operating handle are interconnected by a connector.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the §102(b) rejection of Claims 1-4, 6-8, 23-28, 30, 32, 39, 41, 43-47, 50-53 and 57-68 based on Lenker et al are respectfully requested.

In paragraph No. 10 of the Action, Claims 9-11 and 18-19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Lenker et al in view of Leschinsky (US 6,306,145).

In paragraph No. 11 of the Action, Claims 12-17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Lenker et al in view of Leschinsky and in further view of Healy et al (EP 1 095 634).

In paragraph No. 12 of the Action, Claims 20-22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Lenker et al in view of Blaeser et al (US 6,168,617).

In paragraph No. 13 of the Action, Claims 29, 31, 33-36 and 54-55 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Lenker et al in view Lenker et al (same reference) and in further view of Burns (US 5,032,113).

In paragraph No. 14 of the Action, Claims 37-38 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Lenker et al in view Lenker (US 5,683,451).

In paragraph No. 15 of the Action, Claim 42 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Lenker et al in view of Del Toro (US 5,733,267).

In paragraph No. 16 of the Action, Claims 48-49 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Lenker et al in view of Klein et al (US 5,002,558).

In paragraph No. 17 of the Action, Claim 56 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Lenker et al in view of Harvey et al (US 4,607,868).

Applicants submit that all the above §103(a) rejections should be withdrawn for at least the same reasons that the rejection of independent Claims 1 and 60 based on Lenker et al should be withdrawn as discussed above. All the secondary references do not make up for the deficiencies of Lenker et al.

Allowance is respectfully requested. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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